

### Abstract

A desktop card printer having an external communication link, a multi-platform standardized PDL controller in communication with the link, and at least one data writer in communication with the controller. The controller controls the data output  
5 of data writers. The controller may be a PCL® controller. The data writers may include one or more print heads for visible printing, magnetic write heads for writing to magnetic media, and smart card contacts for writing to embedded smart card chips. The printer may include one or more couplers in communication with one or more of the data writers, for converting information into a form usable by the data writer. The data link may be a  
10 USB or Telnet link. The printer may include an internal USB hub. Image processing and decision making may be performed primarily or entirely within the printer, in particular within the processor. The printer may be commanded by a dedicated host, such as a personal computer, or it may be connected to a network.